

5 February 2011

Dear senate enquiry panel into the

## *'Social and economic impact of rural wind farms'*

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I would first of all like to declare that my children and I are share holders in the 'Hepburn Wind' project, which happens to be the first community owned wind farm in Australia.

I am very proud of our community in taking a stance by going that one step further and doing something about it. I have 2 young children 12 & 14 and I will be able to hold my head up high and say at least we (our community) have done something about it. Instead of burying our head in the sand and pretending that nothing is happening and that the problem will go away.

You only have to turn on the TV or radio today to see what is happening around the world including in our own back yard, this is not normal weather pattern behavior. The only thing that Politicians seem to be concerned about is the impact it may have on jobs, well my view is that people can be retrained and other jobs can be created in the renewable energy sectors including eco tourism.

I believe that we should wind back and close all the coal powered electricity power stations and start to put our money into alternative environmentally sustainable renewable energy sources like:

- Wind turbines
- Wave
- Solar
- Earth sequestration

Instead, we give the power companies incentives to keep the coal power stations going by polluting the atmosphere and our citizens instead of researching and making the transition to more environmentally friendly, sustainable and renewable energy sources.

We need to have a good hard look at what progressive countries are doing in this area and have been for decades, we should show the world that we can be a more progressive country when it comes to the wellbeing of our people and country and show the world that we can all make a difference if we try.

Below are other important facts that should be taken into consideration:

- The [National Health and Medical Research Council](#) (NHMRC) recently concluded that "there is currently no published scientific evidence to positively link wind turbines with adverse health effects."
- [Research](#) by Adelaide consultancy Sonus has recently shown that low frequency noise levels at the beach and in the CBD are typically higher than near wind farms.
- [Recent polling](#) in regional NSW has shown that 85% support wind power with the majority supporting it in their communities.
- Hepburn Wind has already created three direct jobs, and our project has already spent more than \$2m in regional Victoria with more to come.
- Our project was subject to strict planning conditions through the approvals process and will be closely monitored for compliance with some of the strictest environmental controls in the world.
- Our project will contribute \$1m to community initiatives over the next 25 years. In fact, we'll be donating more to the community than we pay in lease fees to the landowner at Leonards Hill.
- Hepburn Wind is expected to cost \$13m and generate more electricity each year than is used by the houses in Daylesford and much of the surrounding area. At the equivalent of less than \$6000/house, no other renewable energy solution comes close.

It's all the more important that we do something about our environment now, not so much for us but for our children and grandchildren, surely we don't want to be remembered as the generation that killed our planet. Let's all work together to make a real difference and think about the future instead of now.

Regards

Michael Andrew Sayn